

What Is a Water Efficiency Program?

Reducing water use and increasing operating efficiencies can help water systems expand capacity, reduce costs, and meet other operational challenges. Actions taken to create efficiencies in the use and delivery of drinking water fall into several categories:

- **Internal (supply side)** – Internal efficiency measures are activities undertaken by a water system, such as meter installation, meter calibration, distribution system leak detection and repair, implementation of rate structures that encourage the efficient use of water by the customer, and bills showing consumption history.
- **External (demand side)** – External measures are developed by the water system to motivate customers to reduce water use. Such measures include distribution and installation of water-saving devices and fixtures, residential and commercial water audits, and reuse of reclaimed water.
- **Customer information** – Pertinent and timely information delivery is an essential component of internal and external efforts, and can in itself lead to customer water use reductions.

Some of the measures overlap categories or are dependent on other measures. For example, a water system audit should precede a leak detection and repair program. Similarly, the installation of meters must be completed before a consumption-based rate structure can be implemented.

To maximize the effectiveness of water efficiency efforts, programs should include a mix of internal, external, and customer information measures, tailored to meet the needs of the system and customers. Cost efficiency studies conducted prior to program development should include the full costs of supplying water, including expenses associated with the development of new water sources.

Where to Get More Information

Water Conservation Guidebook For Small and Medium-Sized Utilities, American WaterWorks Association, Pacific Northwest Section

Water Conservation Planning Handbook, Washington State Department of Health

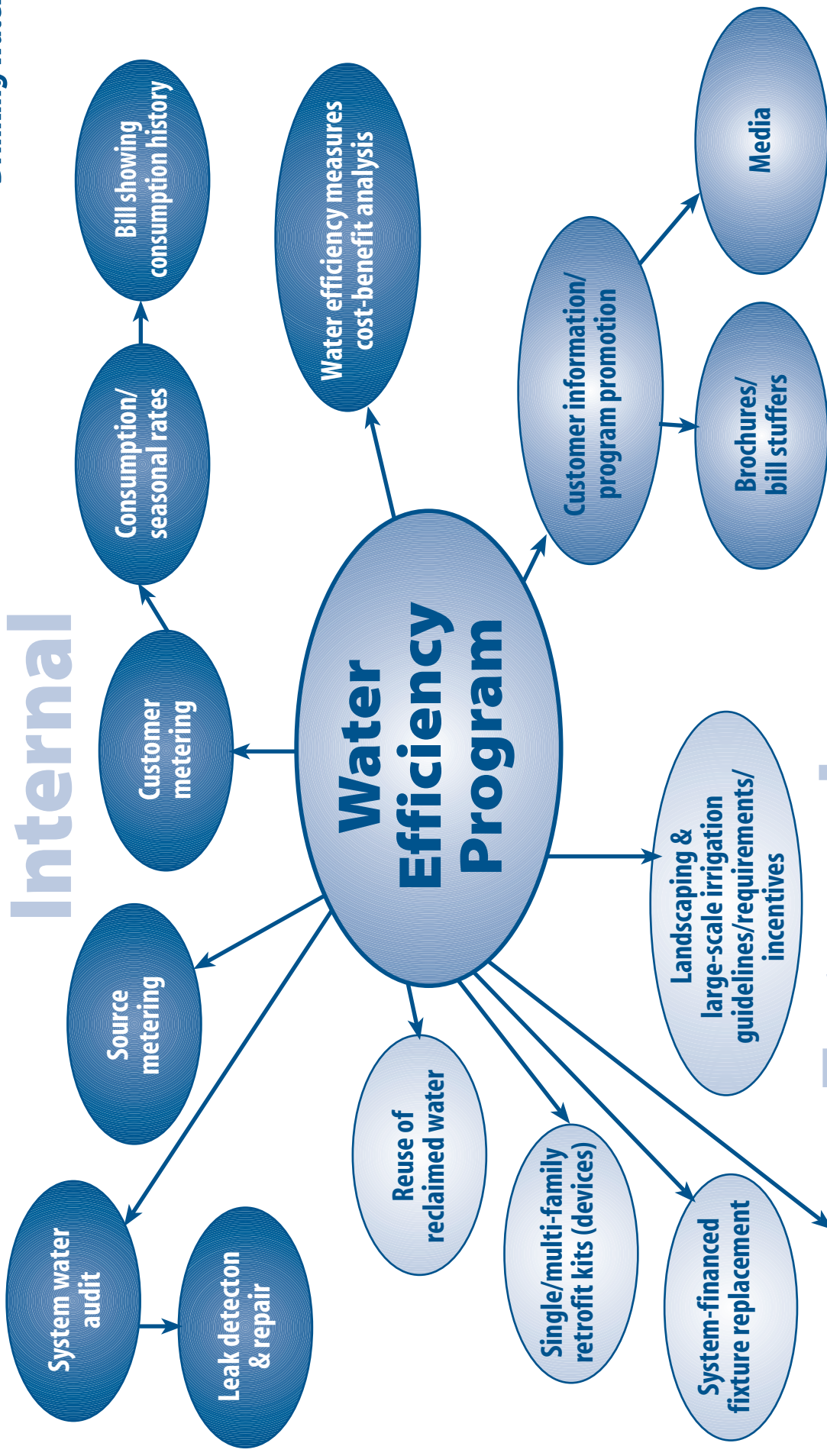
*For assistance with
water use efficiency
planning, contact
your regional water
conservation specialist.*

Northwest
Regional Office -
253-395-6769

Southwest
Regional Office -
360-664-2543

Eastern
Regional Office -
509-456-5067

Internal



External

Customer Information